



MISSOURI GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

A Summary



"Can any man or woman live in 1978 without the information that is offered by libraries? And, even if sheer survival is possible, should anyone living today be required to seek information without having a library immediately available?"

Charles O'Halloran
Missouri State Librarian

The delegates who participated in the Missouri Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services, November 30 - December 1, 1978, overwhelmingly voted that basic library services be provided to all residents of the state. Inherent in their vote was an acknowledgement of the unique contribution of libraries to the quality of life and a concern about the ability of libraries to function in an inflation-clouded society.



BACKGROUND

On December 12, 1977, Governor Joseph P. Teasdale signed a proclamation calling for a Missouri Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services. The governor asked that the conference be a "public forum" for citizens and librarians to address state and local library needs and to make recommendations for the future of library services in Missouri.

Months before the official proclamation, planning had already begun for the Missouri conference, one of 56 state and territorial conferences to be held in preparation for a White House Conference on Library and Information Services.

The White House Conference, scheduled for November 15-19, 1979, will be the first "national town meeting" in our history to focus on something very central to our everyday lives: our minds and how they can grow through reading and absorbing ever-increasing amounts of information.



PLANNING

An advisory committee of 36 members was organized in the summer of 1977 to decide on the format and content of the state conference, to assist in the selection of delegates, and to publicize the event. Included on the committee were educators, business and media representatives, community leaders, librarians and library trustees, and a staff member from the Governor's Office.

The committee first set goals for the conference:

- To increase public awareness of the different types of libraries and information services which exist.
- To focus attention on the crucial importance of access to information.
- To promote libraries as one of society's most valuable resources.
- To suggest appropriate levels of responsibility that should be assumed by local, state and federal governments in support of libraries.
- To develop recommendations for the improvement of the nation's libraries.

The format and content of the conference emerged after months of deliberation. Five issues were defined by the committee as central to any discussion of libraries today:

- Purpose of libraries
- Access to information
- Governance of libraries
- Technology and libraries
- Financing of libraries

Debates and group discussion of the five issues in relation to public policy and a voting session on resolutions formed the backbone of the conference.

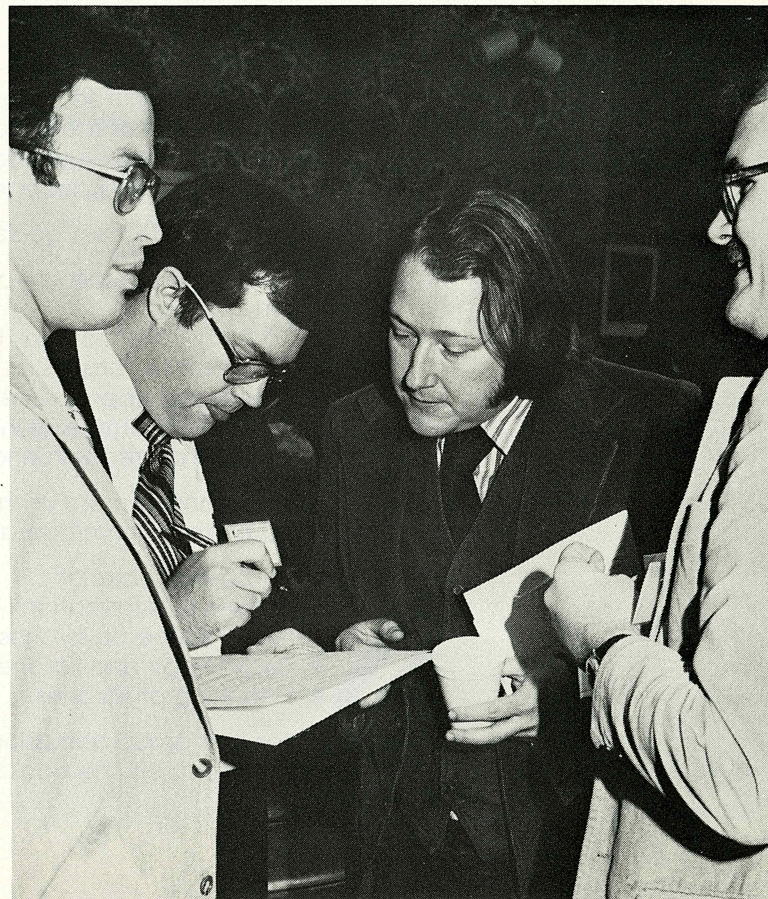
DELEGATES

The selection of delegates became a time-consuming process as an attempt was made to involve a cross-section of the state's population in the conference. Federal guidelines stipulated that 2/3 of the delegates be laypersons and 1/3 be associated with the Missouri library community.

Nominations were solicited from citizens, librarians and library trustees, and each legislator was asked to appoint a delegate from his/her district. Two hundred and seventy-five persons were selected from the 800 nominations submitted to the delegate selection subcommittee; the legislative appointees numbered 135.

In the months preceding the conference, delegates received information on library services in Missouri and the U.S. as well as background readings on the five conference issues.

Delegates were also asked to attend regional meetings in preparation for the state conference.



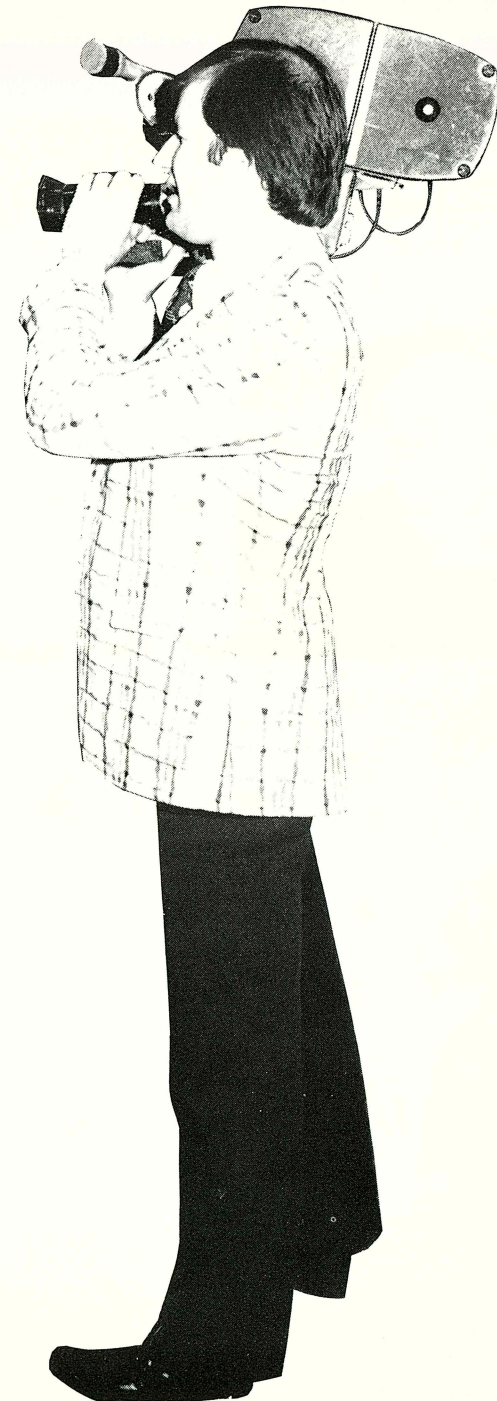
REGIONAL "SPEAK OUTS"

How to bring the conference to the grassroots level was a major concern for the planners. The advisory committee proposed a series of regional "Speak Outs" which would enable the largest number of Missourians to discuss what they wanted from their libraries and to offer their suggestions to local delegates. Librarians throughout the state endorsed the "Speak Out" concept and began organizing local support for the meetings.

Volunteer planning groups coordinated 37 "Speak Outs" during September and October, 1978. Meetings were held in public auditoriums, churches, libraries and even a town cafe. Each meeting varied in format; some featured a citizens' panel, others a main speaker and reaction from the audience. Most of the meetings generated recommendations or resolutions which were presented for consideration at the state conference.

Almost two thousand Missourians attended regional meetings — from Kansas City and Springfield to Hannibal and Cape Girardeau.

The "Speak Outs" received enthusiastic coverage in the news media.



STATE CONFERENCE

Delegates settled in at the Jefferson City Ramada Inn for two days of work that culminated in the adoption of resolutions affecting all types of libraries and their services.



Aristotle is reported to have been able to collect and codify most of the scientific knowledge of his day, place it under one roof, and commit a majority of it to memory. This challenging feat may have been possible for Aristotle in 330 B.C. But no living human could do as much today.

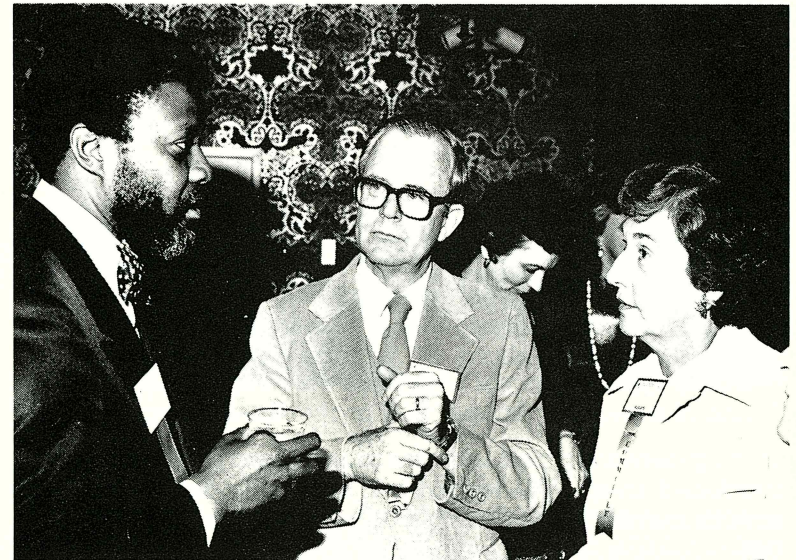
Someone has said that the sum total of human knowledge doubled in the past ten years, would again double within the next five, and by 1990 will be doubling every three months. If this is close to the truth, one can readily visualize the growing importance of the already tremendously significant social institution, the library.

There is no question that libraries are key institutions in America — important for the services they provide to citizens and for the freedom of thought and expression they symbolize.

And libraries are operated by all levels of government — another illustration of how important the people believe their libraries to be. Cities and counties operate libraries; there are regional libraries and a state library. There are local school libraries, junior college libraries, private college libraries, and libraries in our public colleges and universities. It is important for you to remember that the recommendations you will be making do not affect only one sector or one level of government. They will affect all levels of government.

It is interesting to speculate on the future of libraries and information science. Will books become nostalgic symbols of the past as new devices and new technologies are developed to handle the flood of data and information? Will libraries continue to be community centers offering knowledge, culture and recreation in the environment associated with libraries today? Or will libraries become computer banks, marked by flashing lights and cold, impersonal efficiency?

Excerpts from the welcoming speech by Dr. Arthur Mallory, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, speaking on behalf of Governor Joseph P. Teasdale, Missouri Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services

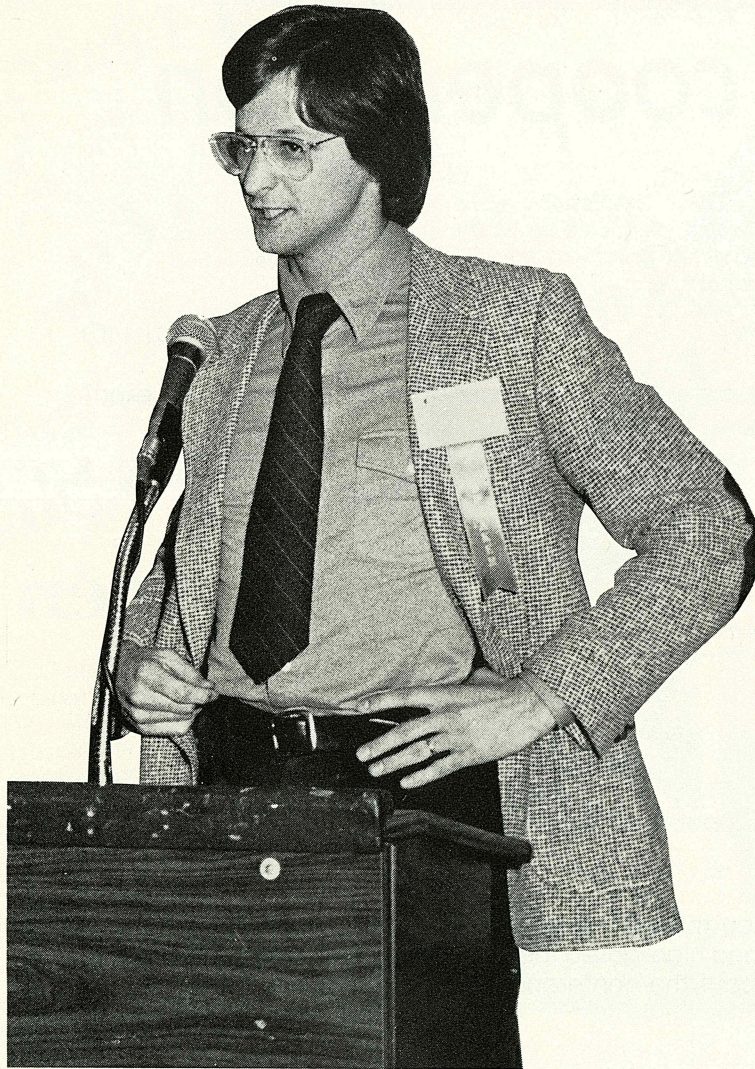




The first day of the conference featured alternating debates and group discussion on federal vs. local control of libraries, the technological future of libraries vs. traditional book-oriented services, access to government information, and the financial survival of libraries in a profit-obsessed economy.

Small groups struggled with the issues raised by debators and produced over 200 resolutions that were submitted to a special committee for consolidation into a manageable number.





On the second day, sixty resolutions were brought to the floor in a five-hour voting session. Thirty-three resolutions were finally adopted by the delegation.

Twelve delegates were also elected to take the Missouri resolutions to the White House Conference on Library and Information Services.



PUBLICITY

Attention was focused on all phases of the Governor's Conference through more than 300 newspaper articles. Local radio and television stations interviewed delegates and speakers and highlighted the state conference during their news programs. The excellent media coverage brought information about the conference to all parts of the state.

OST TRIBUNE, Jefferson City, Mo., Friday, December 1, 1978



ON TO WASHINGTON!

Those elected to represent Missouri at the White House Conference on Library and Information Services include:

Henry Bent, Columbia
Joan Collett, St. Louis
Susie Donnelly, Jefferson City
Mark Freeman, Houston
Mildred King, Springfield
Marilyn Lake, Columbia
Assunta Lilley, Richmond Heights
Arthur Mallory, Jefferson City
Gwendolyn Myers, Webster Groves
Charles O'Halloran, Jefferson City
Denny Pilant, Springfield
Nancy Stiegemeier, Cape Girardeau

Missouri's alternate delegates are:

Ron Bohley, Rolla
Judith Campbell, Fenton
Sara Hill, Kansas City
Joseph Scanlan, Kansas City
Diane Smith, Ozark

Virginia Young of Columbia, a member of the Advisory Committee for the White House Conference, will also go to Washington as a conference delegate.

THE MISSOURI RESOLUTIONS

RESOLVED, That it is an essential function of general purpose libraries

- a) to provide information, recreational, and cultural materials both in book form and through other media forms;
- b) to serve all age groups, both by in-library and through outreach services;
- c) to make available continuing education opportunities and/or to provide information as to where such opportunities are available;
- d) to serve the handicapped and the culturally and educationally deprived;
- e) to provide a pleasant and stimulating milieu for cultural and educational activities within the community (communities) served; and
- f) to enrich the quality of life for all people.

RESOLVED, That, in order to maximize the availability of services, as described in Resolution No. 1, to society at large, cooperation and the sharing of resources between general and special purpose libraries should be facilitated and supported to the fullest possible extent.

RESOLVED, That acceptance of state and federal programs may require a reasonable modification of attitudes regarding absolute local control.

RESOLVED, That library networks be established throughout the state and that local participation in them be encouraged, but not required.

RESOLVED, That effective public relations programs be developed at all levels to explain the role of libraries and to encourage individuals to use library services.

RESOLVED, That library services should be widely available to all the people, therefore

- a) basic library services should be provided in all counties, with state assistance to areas that have no libraries;
- b) more sophisticated information services should be available at the regional level within the state, and provision of services should be coordinated by a statewide plan, with clearly delineated areas of local and regional autonomy.

RESOLVED, That the state remove the present tax limit of twenty-five cents for each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation on property for public library purposes.

RESOLVED, That the delegates support the recommendation of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) that the increased state aid for public libraries appropriation be based upon ten (10) percent of the total amount expended by local libraries for materials and salaries, and that this amount be achieved in one year rather than the three-year period as recommended by CBHE.

RESOLVED, That required programs be developed at all levels of education to introduce the use of the library.

RESOLVED, That the principle of local control is essential and must be maintained.

RESOLVED, That federal programs of a continuing nature be maintained for the future development of library and information services.

RESOLVED, That the State Library authorities continue to implement the adoption of standards of quality for operation of general purpose libraries, taking into account any national guidelines that may be helpful or useful.

RESOLVED, That standards for accreditation of public schools be changed to emphasize strong elementary and secondary school libraries staffed by certified librarians.

RESOLVED, That the Missouri statutes dealing with state aid to public libraries be changed to reflect the following: the Missouri State Library be authorized and empowered to render such aid and assistance, financial, advisory and/or otherwise, to public, school, and academic libraries or networks under such conditions and rules and regulations as are deemed necessary to further the interests of the citizenry and best increase the efficiency of the service which any library is expected to render to its public.

RESOLVED, That the General Assembly be requested to establish a study commission to:

- 1) consider the recommendations of both this Governor's Conference and of the White House Conference on Library and Information Services;
- 2) review existing laws and regulations on libraries;
- 3) review the role of the State Library and its funding in order to provide for the promotion and implementation of the above recommendations;
- 4) review how the total educational dollar is spent in order to recommend basic support for library services as an educational resource.

The study commission should report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly, the Governor, and the people of Missouri by January 1, 1981.

RESOLVED, That the membership of library governing boards be as representative as possible of community groups in the area to be served by the library.

RESOLVED, That the position of State Supervisor of School Library Services be established and maintained in each state.

RESOLVED, That at least one full regional depository for U.S. federal documents be established in the State of Missouri and that the Missouri State Legislature be requested to fund the same.

RESOLVED, That the elderly, the handicapped, and the illiterate or semi-literate members of society are not well-served by our present libraries and information services, therefore aid should be given by the State Library and by other agencies of local, state and national government to provide suitable forms of information, such as films, video materials, audio-tapes, or simplified works, for those presently unserved because of physical, mental or educational handicaps.

RESOLVED, That cooperation between school and public libraries be encouraged.

RESOLVED, That school and public libraries not be combined.

RESOLVED, That a portion of the state aid to public libraries be given over to percentage reimbursement of monies spent by local libraries on materials purchased under shared resource plans.

RESOLVED, That in the interest of cost effectiveness, the Missouri Department of Higher Education, in cooperation with the federal government, provide direction to encourage standardization of design of computer software and hardware systems for libraries so that they will be compatible for interlibrary service nationwide.

RESOLVED, That all library systems review policies and consider user fees.

RESOLVED, That the conference support the establishment of a national periodicals center to be funded by the federal government.

RESOLVED, That continuing education programs for board of trustee members be provided and presented on a yearly basis in easily accessible locations.

RESOLVED, That libraries for the blind and other handicapped persons

- 1) find a more realistic way of measuring growth other than the number of books mailed, a method which forces librarians to mail a large quantity of unwanted books to uninterested readers and therefore inhibits genuine service;

- 2) differentiate between materials needed by recreational and scholarly readers;
- 3) utilize the handicapped on advisory boards and committees created to advise on modernizing facilities for the physically handicapped;
- 4) acquire braille materials which correspond to talking books and cassettes;
- 5) maintain better statistical records on materials for the handicapped.

RESOLVED, That the Missouri State Library establish a committee to publicize the resolutions of this conference and to prepare recommendations to the appropriate state departments concerning the implementation of those resolutions at the state level.

RESOLVED, That independent libraries supported by private foundations whose only responsibility is support of such libraries, if those libraries are fully open to the public, be classified in the Internal Revenue code as educational institutions, thus exempting them from federal income taxes.

RESOLVED, That a future state conference on libraries and information services (using the same guidelines as this conference) be sponsored and financed by the Missouri State Library five years from the current date to reassess the State's libraries for future improvements.

RESOLVED, That the State Library be responsible for centralized direction and interfacing of Missouri's regional library networks.

RESOLVED, That the State Library be provided with the funds to totally finance the administrative costs of the regional library networks.

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association sponsor a copyright holders cooperative whose members shall waive copyright for all non-commercial photocopying. Membership in the cooperative shall be stated on the title pages of books published by members.

COURTESY RESOLUTIONS

RESOLVED, That Governor Teasdale be commended for calling and publicizing this conference so that the citizens of the State of Missouri could express their views and bring to the attention of all Missouri residents the current status and the new directions libraries should take.

RESOLVED, That we express our deep appreciation to Mrs. Susie Donnelly for all the time and energy she has so generously donated, for the excellent leadership she has demonstrated, and the warm friendly atmosphere she has created while serving as chairperson for the Advisory Committee of the Missouri Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services.

RESOLVED, That we express our appreciation to Mr. Charles O'Halloran, Mrs. Susanna Alexander, Mrs. Frances McKinney, and the staff of the Missouri State Library for formulating the blueprint of this program, for contributing their time and talent to this conference, and finally for providing the guidance necessary to bring this conference to such a successful conclusion.

RESOLVED, That Susanna Alexander be commended for all the time, assistance, cooperation, organization and help she provided in the planning of the regional "Speak-Outs" held throughout Missouri. Thank you, Susanna.

POST CONFERENCE ACTIVITY



Resolutions from the state conference were presented to Governor Teasdale, the General Assembly, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education and to Missouri's Congressional delegation. The resolutions are also being studied by various committees of the Missouri Library Association and by the Missouri Libraries Network Board.

Regularly scheduled meetings of the delegates and alternates will be held in Missouri before the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. These meetings will allow further discussion of the resolutions and their presentation at the "national town meeting."

THE STATE OF MISSOURI LIBRARIES

Missouri has over 1500 libraries serving a population of 4.7 million. A breakdown by type includes 153 public, 83 college and university, 34 institutional, 1160 elementary and secondary school libraries, and hundreds of special libraries.

Almost 25 million books are owned by Missouri libraries: 10 million are in public libraries with the remainder in academic and special libraries. Accurate figures on the number of books in school libraries are unavailable, as are figures for non-book materials in all types of libraries.

In 1978, local taxes generated 90% of public library support. State aid amounted to 5% and another 5% came from federal funds. Public school libraries also receive local, state and federal funds. Academic libraries receive support from state, federal, local and private sources. Special libraries are financed by business, industry, and in some cases by state and federal governments.

Total expenditure for libraries in Missouri in 1978 was at least 55 million dollars.

470,000 (10%) residents in 35 out of 114 counties in Missouri do not support or have access to a public library.

Six library networks, covering most areas of the state, are now in operation. These cooperative ventures will make information and library materials readily available to Missourians.

Conference Photos: Keith Smallwood
Brochure Design: Madeline Matson & Friederike Adams



"Libraries are bastions of culture and freedom, outposts of fresh adventures of the human spirit. They are older than schools or colleges, older than any existing government or nation, older indeed than the visible church. Through triumphs and perils, they have been inciters and auxiliaries in the endless stirring task of recreating civilization and seeking its advance. Deriving one from another, they have been present from the beginning of history, serving the work of the mind."

Nathan M. Pusey, President

Harvard University